IV. The Dewan opened the Assembly with the following

ADDRESS.

"Gentlemen,

PRELIMINARY.

Under command of His Highness the Maha Raja, I have very great pleasure in welcoming you to the Sixteenth Session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. Copies of the Administration Report for 1094 will, as usual, be placed in your hands from which you will be able to see in detail how the administration of the State was conducted during the year.

2. Personnel.—Since the last Session of the Assembly, there have been some noteworthy changes in the higher ranks of the public service. Lieut. Col. R. DeL. Faunce, who was Commandant of the Nair Brigade from November 1916, reverted to the British service in May 1919. This was the second time when Col. Faunce was placed in charge of the Military Department of the State, and during this period his experience was of great help to the Government in connection with the enlistment of recruits to the Indian Army. Captain E. W. Antram, Battalion Commandant of the Brigade, was also called back to the British service in May 1919. Since the close of 1094 M. E., Dr. H. Campbell Perkins, Ag. Darbar Physician, has proceeded on leave preparatory to retirement, after a long and honourable career in the State service. Mr. N. Raman Pillai, Dewan Peishkar, Padmanabhapuram, whose varied service extending over a period of thirty-four years was characterised by efficiency, integrity and a lofty sense of duty, has retired on a well-earned pension. Mr. D. J. Sloss, the eminent scholar who was the senior Professor of English in His Highness the Maha Raja's College, has resigned his place under the weight of a heavy domestic affliction. It is also my sorrowful duty to record the untimely death of Mr. B. Walker, the well-known philologist who was the junior Professor of English in the College. The College is all the poorer for the loss of these two distinguished Professors. Another heavy loss to the service which I deeply deplore is that caused by the sudden death of Rao Bahadur R. Mahadeva Aiyar, Chief Secretary to Government. His ripe experience, sound judgment and zealous devotion to duty were valuable assets to the Government in the discharge of their onerous work. His two important official publications, *viz.*, the Kodayar Irrigation Cess Report and the Travancore Land Revenue Manual, are works of great practical value.

3. War and Peace.—The great world-conflict is at an end and Germany has finally ratified the peace terms presented to her. The victory to Great Britain and her Allies in this struggle was so marvellously sudden and so magnificently complete that history has just cause to view it as a moral triumph in which justice and righteousness have, by their inherent force, overthrown the powers of darkness and evil. It is not my purpose to recount here the services rendered by Travancore to the imperial cause during the last quinquennium. I may, however, avail myself of this occasion to convey the cordial thanks of the Government to all ladies and gentlemen, both official and non-official, who have contributed to make our war-efforts a success. One duty now remains, and I look upon it as a debt of honour. Various measures of a beneficial nature have been devised by Government to alleviate the sufferings of the families of those Travancoreans who, while in active service, have died or have been permanently incapacitated. Our obligation to these families is of a solemn nature, and I repeat the exhortation which I have already made to all Heads of Departments and Offices to construe those measures liberally and apply them sympathetically, so as to best fulfil the intentions of the Government in this matter. You are aware that an organisation under the designation of the 'Travancore Soldiers' Committee' has been recently constituted to work in co-operation with the Madras Soldiers' Board. This Committee deals, among other subjects, with questions connected with land rewards or grants, preferential treatment in respect of Government employment, educational concessions for children, and the after-care of wounded and incapacitated soldiers. I hope that this Committee will be of great help to the families of deceased and disabled soldiers in Travancore.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

4. Economic relief.—In my address last year, I gave you a short account of the machinery organised in Travancore to deal with the economic situation created by the war. Since then, that machinery has been in full operation, and even now its activities have not been relaxed to any extent. The reports of the Director of Civil Supplies for 1093 and 1094, already published in the Government Gazette, will give you some idea of the magnitude of the task which the Department of Civil Supplies in Travancore was called upon to discharge, and of the measure of success which has attended the labours of that Department. As early as October 1918, it was found that the local merchants could not cope with the new situation even with the assurance of State help, and that it was necessary for the Government to assume direct responsibility in the matter of the import of rice. Arrangements were accordingly made by the Director of Civil Supplies for the purchase and transport of rice from Burma on Government account, and for this purpose a revolving credit which ultimately rose to twenty-seven lakhs of rupees was placed with the Bank of Madras. The first cargo under these arrangements was shipped in December 1918, and ever since, a steady stream of Burma grain has been pouring into the country. Up to the present, 16 consignments have been imported, bringing in 67,458 tons of rice and 43,589 tons of paddy, whose total value has been estimated at 152·03 lakhs. The landing of consignments in Tuticorin during the monsoon months of 1919 imposed a heavy demand on the resources of the South Indian Railway Company, and the warm appreciation of the Government is due to them for the readiness with which they transported those consignments. Their cordial thanks are also due to the Controller of Shipping in British India for the great consideration shown by him in serving the interests of Travancore. The conservation of food stocks, both indigenous and foreign, as well as their efficient and equitable distribution, demanded the closest attention at the hands of the Department. The export of rice from Travancore was prevented as a temporary measure; conditions for the sale of rice in Nanchanad and Shencottah were prescribed; and the transport of rice from the Padmanabhapuram Division was prohibited except under permits issued by the Director of Civil Supplies. In Kuttanad, where similar control is impracticable, persuasive measures were adopted on an effective scale, combined with arrangements for the purchase of a portion of the crop on Government account. Two censuses of the stocks of local produce were taken. By these and other means, the flow of grain from the granaries to the markets was unintermittently kept up. In the matter of the distribution of stocks, the central advisory committees organised in important towns and the subsidiary committees formed at the places drawing supplies from them, rendered valuable cooperation. These committees were of assistance to the Department in not only giving advice as to local conditions and requirements from time to time, but in also controlling the sale of imported rice and in collecting subscriptions in aid of relief sales to the poor. In view of the heavy work entailed in the supervision of sale-depots and of the difficulty of inducing the better classes to confine themselves to local produce, emergency committees were formed in several places to help the Department. Everything feasible was done in the direction of orderly arrangement at the sale-depots and special care was taken that the imported rice reached the hands of the poor. Mr. T. E. Moir, Director of Civil Supplies, Madras, who inspected one of our rice-distributing centres in August 1919, wrote : "This was a model of what such a centre ought to be". Elaborate arrangements were made for the supply of kerosine oil to the owners of punja lands for the use of the engines engaged in pumping out water. Events have fully justified the control assumed by the Government in respect of rice and other necessaries of life at a period of acute economic strain. Throughout this period, that control has been effective in regard to supply, conservation and distribution, and all reasonable demands from every source have been adequately met at the main markets. The imported rice from Burma, sold at a phenomenally low price, has saved many a poor family from starvation and death. It is only a comparative estimate of the conditions obtaining in Travancore with those prevailing elsewhere that will enable us to see the advantage of the scheme of control adopted here in its true perspective. Far be it from me to assert that there has been no suffering in our midst or that our civil supplies arrangements have been perfect in every way. Government are aware that there has been

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

acute suffering. The fact, however, remains that our hardships have been less intense, our prices less abnormal, and our supplies less unsteady and more evenly distributed than in other countries; and one who knows the sore spots in the economic configuration of the country can only contemplate with a sigh of relief that her suffering was not more acute than it has actually been. I take advantage of this opportunity to give public expression once again to the Government's high appreciation of the solid work of Mr. Cunningham in this connection, and of the remarkable foresight, earnestness, industry and resourcefulness which he has brought to bear on the discharge of his onerous duties. Government also convey their cordial thanks to the several public-spirited gentlemen who have been associated with him in his work. The civil supplies arrangements, as now decided upon, will continue till the end of Minam 1095. Mr. Cunningham is anxious to seek non-official counsel and profit by non-official co-operation; and I assure you that every representation in regard to the details of the arrangements will meet with prompt and sympathetic consideration at his hands.

FINANCE.

5. Revenue and Expenditure.—The results of the transactions of the Government during 1094 M. E. have been highly favourable from every point of view. The revenue of the State has risen from Rs. 1,65,89,541 in 1093 to Rs. 1,81,83,432 in 1094, or by Rs. 15,93,891, while the ordinary expenditure has gone down from Rs. 1,61,55,926 to Rs. 1,60,95,199 or by Rs. 60,727. The receipts of 1094 are the highest on record, and the increase is shared by all the main heads of revenue, which have, with striking uniformity, returned record figures for the year. There has been an increase of 3·49 lakhs under 'Stamps', 2·65 lakhs under 'Customs', 2·08 lakhs under 'Land Revenue', 1·66 lakhs under 'Excise', 1·54 lakhs under 'Forest', and 1·19 lakhs under 'Registration'. The net revenue under 'Excise' has risen from 61·40 lakhs to 65·65 lakhs, under 'Stamps' from 17·84 lakhs to 21·37 lakhs, under 'Forest' from 8·65 lakhs to 10·18 lakhs, and under 'Registration' from 2·99 lakhs to 4·08 lakhs. The decrease in the expenditure to the extent of Rs. 60,727 during 1094, mentioned above, is only apparent, since, if the extraordinary items of outlay incurred during 1093 are excluded for purposes of comparison, the normal service expenditure should be estimated to have risen by more than 9 lakhs during the succeeding year. There has been additional outlay under every head of expenditure, except a few such as 'Devaswoms' and 'Anchal', the increase under 'Medical and Sanitary' being 2·17 lakhs and under 'Education' 1·25 lakhs. The growing requirements of every progressive Department have been liberally met. The transactions of the year have nevertheless yielded a surplus of Rs. 20,88,233, the highest ever realised. The assets of the Government have gone up to Rs. 1,65,87,080 and the liabilities to Rs. 1,05,89,017, resulting in a closing balance of Rs. 59,98,063, which tends to approximate to the figures of pre-war years. The budget of 1095 provides for a revenue of Rs. 1,75,23,400 and an expenditure of Rs. 1,69,07,600, the anticipated increase in expenditure during the year being 8·12 lakhs. This includes provision for an increase of 2·53 lakhs under 'Education' and for special lump allotments of Rs. 40,000 each for the development of the Departments of Agriculture and Industries.

MAIN HEADS OF REVENUE.

6. Season and Rainfall.—The average rainfall during 1094 was 90·23 inches, or 6·33 inches more than in 1093. Extreme scantiness of rainfall was not experienced in any part of the year, while the heavy downpours during the South-West Monsoon flooded the rivers of Muvattupuzha and Minachil, causing distress to the inhabitants of several parts of North Travancore. The necessary measures to alleviate distress were promptly adopted by the Government. The paddy crops of the year were fairly satisfactory.

7. Land Revenue.—The current net demand rose from Rs. 36,52,376 in 1093 to Rs. 38,67,439 in 1094, the amount written off falling from Rs. 5,435 to Rs. 3,265.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly